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PRESS RELEASE

MPA Handles Record 7.1 Million Tons Cargo in 2003
Other Commodity Successes Contribute to Banner Year

Baltimore, MD – The public terminals at the Port of Baltimore surpassed seven million tons of general cargo in 2003 for the first time since World War II. Maryland Port Administration Executive Director James White announced that a 12 percent growth in commodities enabled Baltimore to maintain its national leadership position in handling forestry products and Roll On/Roll Off cargo.

Ro/Ro cargo includes tractors, construction equipment, and farm equipment, and Baltimore commands 50 percent of the market on the East Coast. With the addition of more vehicle manufacturers this past year, the Port also moved from third position into the second largest handler of automobiles in the nation.

Governor Robert L. Ehrlich remarked that expanding the state's international commerce comprises a central pillar of his Administration's top goals. "The Port's role as an economic engine for Maryland cannot be underestimated," he said. "We can all be proud of its track record for creating jobs, earning revenue and enhancing our global reputation. This also demonstrates the skill and professionalism of the workers at the docks."

Almost 16,000 people are employed directly by Port-related companies, and when combined with indirect port-related jobs, the employment number exceeds 113,000. "We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of professionals working at every level at the MPA and the private terminals," added Robert L. Flanagan, Secretary of Transportation. "Between blizzards, hurricanes, and security alerts, they did a superb job in 2003. Of course now they have set the bar very high for 2004."

Port activity generated nearly \$2 billion in personal wage and salary income for Maryland residents last year. This also resulted in \$216.2 million in state and local tax revenues.

The signing of new or expanded long-term contracts by the MPA with several of its biggest customers, including Evergreen, Mediterranean Shipping, and Wallenius-Wilhelmsen helped achieve the new tonnage record. "Evergreen has a history of serving

the Port of Baltimore with our containerships,” noted its President, Thomas Chen. “It is our pleasure to once again renew a long-held and valuable relationship.”

Mediterranean Shipping Company Vice-President Captain Lorenzo DiCasagrande added that his company has committed to ship 500,000 containers over its 10-year contract term through Baltimore. “This reflects MSC’s confidence in the professionalism of the workers at the Port of Baltimore,” he remarked. “We’ve enjoyed a smooth relationship with labor and management here and we look forward to it continuing.”

The MPA’s White noted that Wallenius-Wilhelmsen’s 20-year contract had skyrocketed beyond expectations. “They expected to ship 200,000 tons through Baltimore in 2003 and instead they did 847,000!”

More than a million tons of forest products also passed through Baltimore. This represented a 20% increase in items such as paper, pulp, and lumber, and solidified the Port’s number one ranking nationwide for the second year in a row. A new 100,000 square foot transition shed in South Locust Point that opened in August helped in protecting and expediting this high-valued cargo.

The recent arrival of three new mobile gantry cranes from Finland also testified to the Port’s confidence in its container business. Figures for 2003 showed a 10 percent increase in volume, and Marketing Director John Murray voices optimism for continued growth.

Baltimore’s cruise industry also leapt forward in 2003. More than 40 fully-loaded cruises left the Port as their home base, and 70 are already scheduled for 2004. With more than two thirds of the passengers arriving from outside the state, a significant boost in tourism dollars spent in Maryland, estimated in the tens of millions, was also achieved.

March 2003 witnessed the formation of a citizens/local government Harbor Team Committee, which put together a set of recommendations for the Governor and General Assembly concerning possible dredged material placement sites. This pioneering grassroots effort defused a potentially explosive issue over keeping the Chesapeake Bay healthy and navigable at the same time, and garnered serious attention from other ports with a similar situation. One beneficial use of this dredged material is the restoration of eroded wildlife sanctuaries, and the federal Coastal America organization awarded the MPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in November a Presidential plaque for their Poplar Island Project.

Nearly 300 years old, the Port of Baltimore has consistently remained one of the top U.S. ports for several reasons. Located more than 150 miles inland, Baltimore is the closest U.S. Atlantic seaport to major mid-Western destinations and manufacturing centers. Nestled in the heart of the fourth largest, second wealthiest consumer market in the nation, it also serves as a prime distribution location.

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